



Hope after Floyd

Helping Children After A Disaster Pre-School (Ages 1-5)

Although people of all ages share many feelings and reactions after a disaster, children need special attention.

Typical reactions for children of all ages include:

- ▲ Fear of future disasters
- ▲ Behaviors they might have shown at an earlier age (such as bed-wetting or thumb sucking)
- ▲ Trouble sleeping
- ▲ Fear of natural events associated with the disaster
- ▲ Fear of being left by loved ones

Common responses in this age group are:

- ▲ Thumb sucking/crying
- ▲ Bed-wetting
- ▲ Fears of the darkness or threatening weather conditions
- ▲ Clinging behavior
- ▲ Night terrors/nightmares
- ▲ Loss or increase of appetite/vomiting
- ▲ Nervousness/irritability
- ▲ Problems with separation from parent/siblings
- ▲ Daydreaming/distractibility

Children in this age group are particularly vulnerable. Because they generally aren't able to talk about how they are feeling, they look to trusted adults for comfort and are affected by the reactions of these individuals. Being left by loved ones is a major fear in this age group, and children who have lost homes, family members, pets or toys will need special reassurance.

Some ways adults may help:

- ▲ Say things to reassure the child
- ▲ Give hugs
- ▲ Give extra snacks
- ▲ Encourage talking about how it feels to lose pets or toys
- ▲ Provide comforting bedtime routines, such as nightlights, special story time

Consider professional mental health services for children whose responses to the disaster are getting in the way of regular home and school life.

For more information, call HOPE After Floyd _____ . We can help.



Funded by FEMA through the Division of MH/DD/SAS
State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services

1,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$12.00 or \$.012 per copy. 08/00



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